



## **Task Force Meeting No. 14 Synopsis October 27, 2008**

### **Task Force Members Present\*:**

Co-Chair Shirley Lewis, Co-Chair Sam Liccardo, Teresa Alvarado, Shiloh Ballard, Michele Beasley, Frank Chavez, Judy Chirco, Gary Chronert, Yolanda Cruz, Pastor Oscar Dace, Pat Dando, Dave Fadness, Enrique Fernandez, Leslee Hamilton, Nancy Ianni, Lisa Jensen, Frank Jesse, Matt Kamkar, Charles Lauer, Karl Lee, Linda LeZotte, Pierluigi Oliverio, Dick Santos, Patricia Sausedo, Erik Schoennauer, Judy Stabile, Neil Struthers, Michael Van Every and Jim Zito.

### **Task Force Members Absent:**

Vice-Chair David Pandori, Jackie Adams, Harvey Darnell, Phaedra Ellis-Lamkins, Sam Ho, Jennifer Rodriguez, Alofa Talivaa.

### **City Staff and Other Public Agencies Present\*:**

Ru Weerakoon (Mayor's Office), Roma Dawson (District 3 Council Office), Peter Hamilton (District 9 Council Office), John Ristow (VTA), Chris Augenstein (VTA), Hans Larsen (DOT), Manuel Pineda (DOT), Junko Vroman (ESD), Joseph Horwedel (PBCE), Laurel Prevetti (PBCE), Stan Ketchum (PBCE), Michael Brilliot (PBCE), Hadasa Lev (PBCE), John Baty (PBCE).

\*As verified by registering attendance on Sign-In Sheets.

### **1. Welcome and Review of Agenda**

Meeting convened at 6:30 p.m.

### **2. Review and Approval of September 22 and 29, 2008 Meeting Synopses**

The September 22 and 29, 2008 synopses were approved.

### **3. Review of Agenda and Work Program Status**

Stan Ketchum provided a quick review of the Agenda and Work Program Status.

### **4. Discussion on the September 29, 2008 Panel Discussion**

The Task Force discussed what they learned from the panel discussion and what should be considered in the General Plan Update. The Task Force identified the following lessons learned and considerations:

- Panelists reinforced that people can work anywhere and that San José needs to be perceived as a desirable place to attract future employers and employees.
- Panelists consistently stated that, to make San Jose attractive to innovative workers, alternative means of transportation need to be provided.
- One of the panelists stated that, for the company that he represents, roughly 50% of the workers work off site and not on the corporate campus. This was noteworthy.

- Interesting to note that, while the Task Force is discussing the need for higher residential densities and affordable housing, the panelists did not bring these issues up. They did say that there is a need for more public gathering spaces in San Jose, such as Lincoln Avenue in Willow Glen.
- Pessimistic of the optimistic job growth projected by the panelists.
- Panel emphasized the importance of flexibility to accommodate the changing nature of the workplace. Was impressed with how enthusiastic the panelists were to participate in this dialogue. The City needs to do a better job of engaging the private sector in its efforts and planning processes.
- The panel mentioned that many high tech companies are reluctant to build vertical workplaces, but when companies like Adobe did, they liked it.
- The panel discussed the importance of creating livable hubs and mini-downtowns that provide for the daily needs of residents.
- The panel said that they have a diverse workforce and that they need the expertise of the older workers. San Francisco is the residence of choice for younger workers out of college, but San José may be more appealing to older workers as a place to live and raise a family. The key message is that San Jose needs to focus on creating a City where people want to come to live.
- When looking at traffic impacts of economic growth, the total number of people employed by a company versus the number of people working at a company's site is deceptive.
- The growth of large local companies does not necessarily equate to significant growth in local jobs, because many of these large companies are growing overseas, and not here. The companies that are likely to employ more local people are small new companies. These are the kinds of companies that should be encouraged.
- The panel recognized that a sea of parking was not appropriate.
- People pick the destination first and their job second. Therefore, the City needs to create vibrant communities throughout San Jose to attract the new work force.
- The panel discussion was focused on current trends. I did not get a sense that they knew where we were headed in the future. I was dismayed to hear that the young Adobe workers prefer to work in the San Francisco office over the San Jose office. Clearly, we need to make San Jose more attractive to these younger workers. Generally not impressed with the speakers.

## **5. Presentation and Discussion on Transportation**

- a. DOT, VTA and Fehr & Peers Transportation Consultants presented existing transportation conditions, policies and plans.
- b. Task Force discussed transportation issues with the transportation panel.
  - Need data: 1. What population and density is needed to support different types of transit; 2. How is transit funded?
    - Most of transit is funded by Measure A. There are declining revenue sources for other program areas.
  - If the road system is nearly built-out, why are we spending so much money on roads versus pedestrians and bikes?
  - Clarify chart on transportation system status (page 4 slide 2 of presentation).
    - Hans Larsen indicated that most of the money allocated to roadways is going to upgrade existing roadway facilities and not to build new facilities.

- Liked the images of build-out, but didn't see accommodation for bicycles. What is PDA/PCA, and what is congestion pricing?
- In Fehr & Peers' report they are showing a Class III bike lane on 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> street. Is that correct?
  - Hans mentioned that the City is preparing an updated bike master plan. The current master plan is 10 years old and planned for 300 miles of bike facilities, 170 miles are complete. The updated master plan is for 500 miles of bike facilities, including looking at a new concept of separated bikeways/paths.
  - Chris Augenstein explained that congestion pricing is the practice of charging motorists more to use a facility during periods of heaviest use. Dynamic pricing is based on real-time traffic observed on the facility. High-Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes allow low-occupancy vehicles to use HOT lanes for a charge while high-occupancy vehicles can use the lane at no charge or at a discounted rate. Chris explained that the goal of the Priority Development Areas (PDAs) program is to encourage more housing adjacent to transit and to improve those communities adjacent to transit facilities. Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs) are areas where development should be off-limits.
- "Right sizing" arterials is the way to go to accommodate bike lanes and wider sidewalks and reduce vehicle miles traveled. This should be included in Envision San Jose.
- North San José funding for roadway widening is disproportionate to the funding allocated for pedestrians and bike facilities and transportation management measures. There is a concern that this disparity will continue citywide.
- While Level of Service (LOS) might be an important measure, mitigation should not include just "blowing-out" intersections to alleviate projected congestion.
  - Hans mentioned that about one-third of the city has a relaxed LOS Policy. It is a balancing act. The City's flexible LOS policy allows the development of higher density, transit and pedestrian oriented communities while protecting those suburban areas of the city. The city has not changed how it calculates LOS and is not proposing to do so. The City conforms to the national evaluation system.
- Do we let funding drive transportation planning or transportation planning drive funding? Do we need changes in funding to support the things we want to do (i.e., pedestrian and bike facilities).
  - Hans suggested that a new federal administration could set a new direction for federal funding of transportation.
- What are we doing about signal synchronization of expressways?
  - Hans answered that staff would get back to the Task Force on where the money is going. Hans noted that there are planned investments that will upgrade the efficiency of signal systems and allow buses the ability to pre-empt lights.
- There is not enough money in the budget to maintain infrastructure. GP '75 had an aggressive transit policy. According to Table 2 on page 15 of the Fehr & Peers report the mode split numbers haven't changed, which means we've been spending billions on the wrong thing.
- What are the criteria for protected intersections? How do developers contribute to transit? Why doesn't our county compete well for regional money?
  - John Ristow (VTA) indicated that Santa Clara County could do better in competing with the rest of the Bay Area. In the past we have been underrepresented on the MTC board; now have better representation.

- Hans stated that staff would bring policy and implementation procedures regarding protected intersections back to the Task Force. To provide traffic mitigations, developers would not typically fund new transit service but would build pedestrian improvements and/or bus shelters that support transit.
- c. Transportation Considerations for Envision San José 2040
- d. Continued Task Force Discussion with Transportation Panel
  - In response to a Task Force question, Hans noted that with the signing of the “Complete Streets Act” (AB 1358) complete streets measures would need to be incorporated into the general plan.
  - Are there any statistics on dynamic jobs that require people to be in their cars because of their jobs?
    - Hans responded that census data captures where people work. Mobile workers could fall into the “other” category.
  - The planned growth areas seem to exacerbate the jobs-housing imbalance, particularly in regards to North San Jose.
    - Hans said that the idea of locating jobs in the southern part of the city in Edenvale and Coyote was to provide opportunities to create a geographic balance. Hans said that the rationale for allowing more job growth in North San Jose is that North San Jose is already a job center and has good existing and planned transit access. Hans then noted that a big focus of the North San Jose Plan was to create a better jobs-housing balance in North San Jose by locating high density housing in this area.
  - While LOS is important, it tends to drive planning decisions more than other measurements, such as VMT, that are more important. We should place more emphasis on measures like VMT.
  - Other communities are developing LOS measurements for pedestrians and bikes. You mention Portland, Oregon as an example. Are there other cities that have innovative approaches to evaluate the movement of people?
    - Hans acknowledged that there are a number of progressive cities designing for people and not cars. Perhaps LOS is important in some areas, but not in others. If you design a community based on LOS you get a community designed for cars and not for people walking or biking. The measure that the city would like to use is mode share—how many people are walking, biking or taking transit to get around as compared to driving. Usually the more auto-oriented areas are the most congested.
  - Could we paint every road with bike lanes?
    - Hans stated that the issue with adding bike lanes isn’t cost. Need policy support to “right-size” existing General Plan streets to include bike/pedestrian facilities. Sometimes have to ask what’s more important, on-street parking or bike lanes?
  - Need more data comparing existing conditions.
  - The City of Stockton was sued over their General Plan Update and one of the requirements of their settlement was to reduce VMT. Are there any standards for how to reduce VMT?
  - Why is carpooling doing poorly?
    - Sohrab Rashid (Fehr & Peers) suggested that the reason could be based on land use patterns.

## 6. Reconfirm Land Use/Transportation Scenario Guidelines

This agenda item was not discussed.

## **7. Announcements**

Stan Ketchum reminded the Task Force of the upcoming installment of the Great Cities Speaker Series, the Public Arts Tour, and the Complete Streets presentation in Redwood City.

## **8. Public Comments**

- A project that recently went before the Planning Commission at San Carlos and Meridian was a good opportunity for providing multi-modal transportation opportunities in the form of a bike lane, but staff stated there was no room. The City shouldn't have to build all of the projected housing in order to get funding to support multi-modal transportation improvements.
- Should extend light rail a lot more than is currently planned; people will use it.
- Global warming is real; need more drastic action now; get people out of gyms and onto bikes; make streets safe; make it less convenient to have a car in San José. Sierra Club/Cool Cities San José provided information on how to achieve AB 1358.
- Good roads equals happier drivers equals safer for bikes.
- If there are major budget shortfalls need to address fundamental structural fiscal problems.
- There should be development triggers to ensure that the necessary infrastructure is in place before high density development is permitted.
- Make global warming and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions a high priority for Envision San Jose 2040.
- Do we thoughtfully design Transit Oriented Development to blend in with and be embraced by the community?

## **9. Adjourn**

- Meeting adjourned at 9:06 p.m.